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PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN TIMES OF ARMED CONFLICT

Cyprus, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, United States of America and Yemen: draft resolution

Protection of the environment in times of armed conflict

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that the use of certain means and methods of warfare may have dire effects on the environment,

Recognizing also the importance of the provisions of international law applicable to the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict and, in particular the rules of universal applicability laid down in the Hague Convention respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, of 18 October 1907, with the Regulations annexed thereto 1/ and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, 2/ and the rules binding on States parties to the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, 3/ and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) of 1977, 4/ and to the Convention

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1/ See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The Hague Convention and Declarations of 1899 and 1907 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

2/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

3/ Ibid., Nos. 970, 971, 972 and 973.

4/ Ibid., vol. 1125, No. 17512.

on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques of 1977, 5/

Expressing its deep concern over environmental damage and depletion of natural resources, including the destruction of hundreds of oil-well heads and the release and waste of crude oil into the sea, during recent conflicts,

Noting that existing provisions of international law prohibited such acts,

Concerned that the provisions of international law prohibiting such acts may not be well known,

Expressing the view that the natural environment as such should not be a legitimate military objective and may not be directly attacked,

Expressing its appreciation for the report of the Secretary-General issued pursuant to decision 46/417, 6/

Stressing that wanton destruction of the environment with no legitimate military objective is clearly contrary to existing international law,

Regretting that during periods of armed conflict there is inevitably some collateral damage to the environment, just as there is inevitably some collateral damage to civilian objects and collateral injury and death to civilians during armed conflict,

1. Urges States to take all measures to ensure compliance with the existing international law applicable to the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict;

2. Appeals to all States that have not yet done so to consider becoming party to the relevant international conventions;

3. Further urges States to take steps to incorporate the provisions of international law applicable to the protection of the environment into their military manuals and to ensure that they are effectively disseminated.

5/ Ibid., vol. 1108, No. 17119.

6/ A/47/328.